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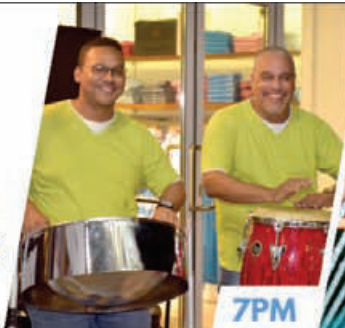
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The small-town library that borrowed hope: A community rebuilt by books

OAK CREEK, WISCONSIN — In the heart of Oak Creek, a town where the winter winds usually bite harder than the local news, something remarkable has taken root. It didn't involve a grand municipal project, a corporate takeover, or a multi-million dollar donation. Instead, the transformation of this community began with a single, handwritten note tucked inside a well-worn, library-bound copy of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*.

The note, written on a simple piece of yellow legal pad paper, was discovered by a high school junior named Leo during a late-night study session. It read: "This book kept me company when I felt like the world had forgotten I existed. If you're holding this, know that you aren't alone either. Pass it on."

What started as a solitary, anonymous gesture of kindness has snowballed into what locals are now calling "The Oak Creek Book Chain." Within months, the Oak Creek Public Library has evolved from a quiet repository of books into the beating heart of a grassroots movement that is fundamentally altering the town's social



fabric. Library director Sarah Jenkins, who has managed the branch for nearly twenty years, says she has never seen anything like it. "Initially, we thought it was a fluke a one-off 'Post-it' note left by a sentimental reader," Jenkins explained, gesturing toward a now-overflowing display near the entrance titled *The Hope Shelf*. "But then it happened again. And again. By the third week, books were being returned not just with notes, but with pressed flowers, handmade bookmarks, and even five-dollar gift cards for the local

coffee shop tucked into the back covers."

The "Hope Shelf" operates on a simple, self-sustaining logic: take a book that speaks to you, read the message left by the previous borrower, and when you return it, add your own piece of encouragement for the next stranger. It has turned the act of reading traditionally a solitary endeavor into a silent, town-wide conversation. The movement has provided a vital lifeline for the town's most vulnerable populations, particularly its senior citizens. Oak Creek, like many Midwestern towns, has seen its

younger generation migrate toward larger cities, leaving behind an aging population that often struggles with isolation.

Martha Higgins, an 82-year-old widow who has lived in the same bungalow on 5th Avenue for five decades, says the library has become her primary social outlet. "I found a note in a mystery novel three weeks ago from a young man who said the story helped him get through a particularly grueling week of midterms," Martha said, her eyes twinkling. "I wrote back to him on the same slip of paper, telling him

that at my age, every week feels like a midterm, but we keep going anyway. We've been 'pen pals' through that one book for a month now. I don't know his face, but I know his heart. It makes the world feel a little less empty when I turn off my lamp at night."

The ripple effect has extended far beyond the library's brick-and-mortar walls. Across the street, "The Perk Up," a small family-owned coffee shop, has seen a 50% increase in its "suspended coffee" program a system where customers prepay for a drink for someone who might be struggling.

Owner Mike Russo attributes the surge in generosity directly to the library's influence. "People come in here after browsing the stacks, and they're just... softer. They're more patient in line. They're looking for ways to pay it forward," Russo noted. "I had a customer last Tuesday who paid for the next ten people behind him just because he'd found a particularly moving poem in a book across the street. Kindness is a muscle; the more this town exercises it, the stronger it gets." □

From shelter to service: The 'rescue ranks' program changing lives



ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA — In a sun-drenched training yard on the outskirts of Asheville, a formerly "unadoptable" German Shepherd mix named Buster is proving that everyone deserves a second chance. Just six months ago, Buster was days away from being euthanized at a high-kill shelter. Today,

he is the newest graduate of the "Rescue Ranks" program, a unique initiative that pairs shelter dogs with military veterans suffering from PTSD. The program, founded by former Army Sergeant Leo Miller, is built on a simple philosophy: "Two souls, both feeling a bit lost, finding their way back together."

er." Miller, who struggled with his own transition to civilian life, realized that the discipline of dog training provided the structure he was missing, while the unconditional loyalty of a dog provided the emotional safety he needed. "The beauty of Rescue Ranks is that it's a dual-rescue," Miller explains, watching Buster execute a perfect 'stay' command for his new handler, a veteran named Elias. "We're saving these dogs from the brink, and in return, they're providing a sense of purpose and security to men and women who have given everything for this country."

The training process is rigor-

ous, lasting twelve weeks. Veterans and their dogs work together daily, learning not just basic commands, but specialized tasks designed to mitigate the symptoms of PTSD. Dogs are trained to create physical "buffer zones" in crowded places, wake their handlers from nightmares, and provide deep-pressure therapy during panic attacks.

For Elias, who spent years struggling to leave his house,

Buster has been a literal lifesaver. "Before Buster, I felt like a ghost in my own life," Elias says, his voice thick with emotion. "Now, I have to get up. I have to go for walks. I have to be present

because he's counting on me. He doesn't see a broken soldier; he just sees his best friend."

The program is entirely funded by community donations and local grants, ensuring that veterans receive the dogs and the training at no cost. Local businesses have stepped up too, with a nearby pet food company providing a lifetime supply of kibble for every graduate.

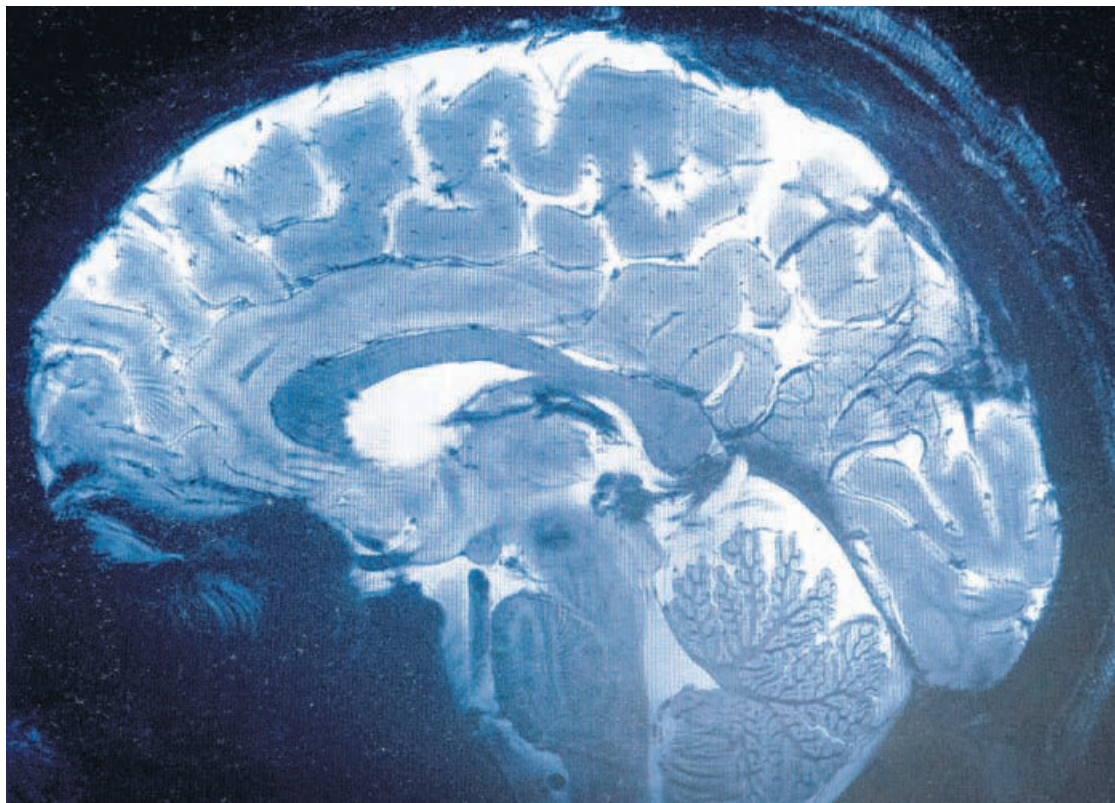
As the sun sets over the Blue Ridge Mountains, Miller watches the newest class of recruits. "People always ask who's rescuing who," he says with a smile. "At the end of the day, it doesn't matter. What matters is that neither of them is alone anymore." □

Healing the Mind: Breakthrough in treatment-resistant depression

NEW HAVEN, CT — In a major leap forward for psychiatric medicine, researchers at Yale University have unveiled new brain-imaging data that finally decodes how fast-acting treatments "reset" the neural circuits of patients suffering from severe, treatment-resistant depression. The study, released on March 8, 2026, offers a definitive roadmap for a new generation of antidepressants designed to provide relief in hours rather than weeks.

Cracking the "Neural Code"

For decades, the "gold standard" for treating depression relied on medications that take over a month to show efficacy, a timeframe that is often dangerously long for those in the depths of a mental health crisis. However, the new findings from the Yale School of Medicine highlight a fundamental shift in how we understand the brain's recovery process. By utilizing advanced functional MRI (fMRI) and PET scans, the Yale team tracked changes in critical brain receptors that facilitate communication between neurons. They discovered that fast-acting compounds, such as ket-



This image made with the Iseult Magnetom 11.7 T MRI shows a brain during a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) exam simulation at the Neurospin facilities in the Paris-Saclay Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission (CEA - Commissariat à l'énergie atomique et aux énergies alternatives) centre in Gif-sur-Yvette, on March 22, 2024.

amine and its derivatives, trigger an immediate release of Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor (BDNF) a protein often described as "Miracle-Gro for the brain". This protein rapidly repairs damaged synaptic connections in the prefrontal cortex and hippocampus, regions vital for mood regulation.

A success rate that defies tradition

While traditional SSRIs typically only help about one-third of patients achieve full remission on the first try, the results from these fast-acting protocols are significantly more robust.

Rapid Response: Nearly 65% of patients who have

failed multiple other treatments show significant improvement within 24 hours.

Structural repair: The imaging showed that even after a single dose, dendritic spines the "branches" of brain cells began to regrow, effectively re-wiring the emotional circuits that had been "pruned" by chronic stress and depres-

sion.

"This discovery finally shows how the sensation of 'recovery' works at the molecular level," noted the researchers in a summary published by ScienceDaily.

Beyond the pill: The Rise of Intensive Protocols

The breakthrough coincides with other "compressed" treatment models gaining traction this March. A separate study from UCLA Health found that an intensive five-day protocol of Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) a non-invasive brain stimulation offered symptom relief comparable to the standard six-week treatment.

"We are moving toward a world where a week of intensive therapy could replace years of trial-and-error with different pills," said Dr. Thomas Adams, a Yale neurotherapy expert visiting the University of Arkansas this month to discuss these somatic interventions.

The human impact

For patients like 42-year-old Sarah M., who participated in the imaging trials, the science is more than just data. "I lived in a fog for fifteen years." □

The 'Gardens of Grace': How an inner-city lot became a neighborhood oasis

DETROIT, MICHIGAN — For nearly two decades, the corner of Cass and Ledyard was nothing more than an eyesore a vacant, trash-strewn lot that stood as a symbol of urban decay. But this spring, that same corner is a riot of color, scent, and life. It is now the "Gardens of Grace," an urban farm and community space that is feeding more than just the bodies of Detroit's residents.

The transformation was spearheaded by 24-year-old Jada Williams, who grew up three blocks away. Tired of seeing her neighborhood defined by its empty spaces, Jada gathered a small group of volunteers and spent a

year clearing debris, testing soil, and petitioning the city for the right to transform the land.

"I wanted to create something that looked like the way we felt inside resilient, vibrant, and growing," Jada says, standing amidst rows of ripening tomatoes and blooming marigolds. "This isn't just about vegetables. It's about taking back our narrative."

The Gardens of Grace operates on a "take what you need, give what you can" model. Residents are encouraged to harvest fresh produce for their families, and in return, many spend their Saturday mornings weeding, watering,

or teaching younger kids about the environment. The garden has become a vital source of fresh food in an area often classified as a "food desert."

Beyond the nutrition, the garden has significantly impacted local safety and social cohesion. According to local precinct data, calls for service in the immediate two-block radius have dropped by nearly 25% since the garden opened. "Criminals don't like bright, well-cared-for spaces where people are always watching and talking to each other," says Officer Mark Peterson. "Jada and her team have done more for public safety here than a dozen patrols ever could."



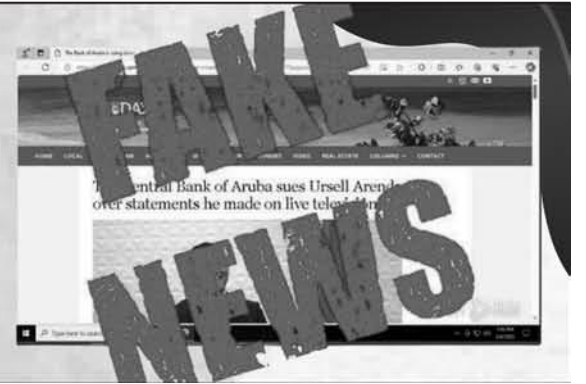
The garden also hosts "Wednesday Workshops," where local elders teach younger generations traditional skills like pickling, composting, and even herbal medicine. It has become a bridge between generations, a place where stories are told over shovels and watering cans. As Jada prepares for the first harvest festival of the

season, she reflects on the lot's past. "This land used to represent what we lost," she says, handing a freshly picked cucumber to a passing neighbor. "Now, it represents everything we're building together. It's amazing what happens when you just give the earth and the people a little bit of grace." □

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Oscar nominee Benicio del Toro says 'One Battle' has 'heart'



Puerto Rican actor Benicio Del Toro attends the 98th Oscars Nominees Luncheon at the Beverly Hilton hotel in Beverly Hills, California on February 10, 2026.

Los Angeles, United States

Benicio del Toro won his first Oscar 25 years ago for "Traffic."

This year, he is once again in the Academy Award conversation for his soulful turn as karate dojo owner and part-time savior of immigrants Sergio St Carlos in "One Battle After Another," a role he says reflects his own sensibilities.

"There is a lot of me in there," Del Toro told AFP ahead of the Oscars gala on March 15, where he will vie for best supporting actor honors with co-star Sean Penn, Swedish veteran Stellan Skarsgard, Jacob Elordi ("Frankenstein") and Delroy Lindo ("Sinners").

In Paul Thomas Anderson's high-octane, politically charged thriller about leftist revolutionaries, white supremacists and immigration raids, Sensei Sergio provides a sense of calm at the film's heart.

Most of Del Toro's scenes come opposite Leonardo DiCaprio, who plays Bob Ferguson, a highly strung, and somewhat strung out, former militant who must hunt for his missing daughter (Chase Infiniti) when the past comes back to haunt

him.

The 59-year-old Puerto Rican actor acknowledged he was surprised by the reception he has received for his role, which accounts for less than 15 minutes of screen time.

"It feels good, and it also can make you a little bit uncomfortable too," he said in a Zoom conversation. "I'm proud of it."

"One Battle After Another" which earned 13 Academy Award nominations is the front-runner to take the best picture Oscar.

"I did enjoy the film, and I felt that the film did have a lot of potential," Del Toro said, noting that he felt his co-stars were "really the protagonists," with his to a lesser extent.

"Perhaps there's something in a movie that is so dark... since it brings a little bit of a sense of hope," he added of his character though he admits he did not initially see him that way.

- 'There's a heart there' -

Del Toro was initially studying business at a university in California when he dropped out to pursue acting.

After some small television

roles, an appearance in a Madonna music video and a few big screen appearances, his major breakthrough came in 1995 with "The Usual Suspects."

And then in 2001, he won the Oscar for best supporting actor for Steven Soderbergh's "Traffic," in which he played a Mexican border cop who tries to remain honest amid the drug wars. He bested a stacked field that included Willem Dafoe and Jeff Bridges.

A second Academy Award nomination followed for Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu's "21 Grams."

Del Toro, who has worked with top directors from Soderbergh to Inarritu to Denis Villeneuve, says he was immediately drawn to "One Battle" for the chance to work with Anderson for a second time, after "Inherent Vice" (2014).

The director "just creates a real comfortable place for creativity, for collaboration," he said.

Anderson asked him if he would play a karate instructor and sent him a photo of a tiger... in a martial arts kimono.

But as time passed, the character evolved from someone just helping Ferguson on his search into more of a "fighter for the underdog, a protector of these migrants who were looking for the American dream," he said.

In one scene, Sensei Sergio introduces Ferguson to his extended family -- and to some of the migrants he hides so they can avoid arrest.

"I felt very, very, very, very strong about it," Del Toro said. "I felt like it needed to be treated with humanity... with respect." □



Paramount Skydance CEO David Ellison speaks during the Bloomberg Screentime conference in Los Angeles on October 9, 2025.

Paramount's Ellison vows CNN editorial independence

New York, United States

Paramount Skydance chief David Ellison sought Thursday to calm fears over the future of CNN, pledging to protect the news network's editorial independence as his company closes in on a landmark takeover of Warner Bros. Discovery.

"CNN is an incredible brand with an incredible team, and we absolutely believe in the independence that needs to be maintained, obviously for those incredible journalists, and we want to support that going forward," Ellison told CNBC.

The remarks came days after Netflix abruptly withdrew from a months-long bidding war for Warner Bros. Discovery, leaving Paramount as the apparent winner to acquire the media giant and its crown-jewel assets, including CNN, HBO and the Warner Bros. film studio.

"Who we want to talk to is the 70 percent of Americans, and really around the world, that identify as centre-left or centre-right. And we want to be in the truth business. We want to be in the trust business. And that's not going to change," he added.

With a purchase of Warner Bros. Discovery, which requires regulatory approval and a vote by Warner shareholders, the Ellison family will control a constellation of media properties spanning the globe.

David's father, Oracle billionaire Larry Ellison, one of the world's richest men, largely financed the takeover and is also a longtime ally and financial backer of President Donald Trump.

The Ellisons' takeover of Paramount last year saw major changes at US broadcaster CBS, with personnel moves at its news division that many interpreted as sympathetic to Republican criticism about mainstream media.

Asked about the cost-cutting that will take place after a merger is approved, Ellison said Paramount "will absolutely have to rationalize the overall corporate overhead of the company," though he added this would not impact the company's creative ambitions. □

In Finland, kids take hovercraft to school over frozen Baltic Sea

Pargas, Finland

Skipper Sampsa Jalo greets three young children on their way home from school as they board an unusual amphibious vessel docked and humming at a wooden pier on the frozen Baltic Sea.

Due to unusually thick ice this winter, a hovercraft called "Snovit" ("Snow White") has replaced the ferries that normally transport 12-year-old Hugo Wickstrom, nine-year-old Julia Jalkanen and eight-year-old Nils-Johan Ostman to the islands where they live in southwestern Finland's Pargas archipelago. This is only the third time in 15 years that hovercrafts have been brought in because of thick ice in Finland's archipelagos.

More than 81,000 islands dot the Nordic country's 1,100-kilometre (680-mile) coastline. Here in the Pargas archipelago, 107 islands are inhabited year-round by nearly 3,000 residents. As the cushions under the



An hovercraft used also to bring home kids from school, floats on the ice of the Finnish archipelago on March 3, 2026 in Pargas, Finland.

vessel filled with air, the hovercraft lifted off the icy surface and set out across the frozen sea.

In the back seat, the three children agreed their school commute was "very exciting".

"Especially when it drifts like

this," said Wickstrom, showing how the hovercraft glides sideways on the ice.

"It moves very fast," Jalkanen said with a little smile. State-owned ferry operator Finferries replaced some of its regular vessels with six hovercrafts when freezing

temperatures in February led to the formation of unusually thick ice.

"The ships can handle the ice but it's so slow and expensive because it uses a lot of fuel," Jalo explained.

A trip with a commuter ferry or vessel that normally

takes an hour now takes "five or six hours to cover the same distance" due to the current ice conditions, he explained.

By hovercraft, "the same journey can be completed in 10 minutes".

Behind the windows of the vessel, which has room for five to seven people, forest-covered islands slid by.

Soon it was time for Ostman to disembark.

Jalo said piloting the hovercraft required "constant concentration" as wind conditions, fog and snowfall all posed challenges when manoeuvring through the landscape at a speed of 30 knots.

"The weather conditions change rapidly here... Let's say it is both challenging and fun," he said, smiling.

This winter was the second time since 2009 that he had the chance to sit behind the wheel of a hovercraft.

"This is the kind of device you don't normally see in the archipelago," he said. □

The gift of inclusion: Milano Cortina 2026 sets record for accessibility

VERONA, Italy — As the sun set over the ancient 2,000-year-old Arena di Verona, the opening ceremony of the Milano Cortina 2026 Paralympic Winter Games signaled more than just the start of a competition. It marked a historic leap in global accessibility, turning one of the world's oldest Roman amphitheaters into a symbol of modern inclusion. A New Gold Standard for Participation

This year's Games have officially become the largest in history, featuring a record 611 athletes from 55 national delegations. Among the most significant milestones is the record-breaking participation of women, with 160 female athletes competing across six sports a 17% increase from the Beijing 2022 Games.

"As a female, as a mom, as someone injured, it feels amazing to show the way for others," said Laura

Dwyer, a U.S. wheelchair curler who is part of the record-breaking cohort.

Breaking barriers in the city

The spirit of "Design for All" has moved beyond the stadium and into the streets of Northern Italy. In Milan, a €55 million investment has transformed the city's transit, making 83% of Metro stations fully accessible. In the wider Lombardy and Bolzano regions, 68 new accessible trains have been introduced, featuring step-free boarding to ensure that fans with disabilities can travel between venues with the same independence as any other spectator.

Even the historic host of the Opening Ceremony underwent a €20 million modernization to meet international Paralympic standards, proving that even antiquity can evolve to welcome everyone.

The world's most acces-

sible broadcast

For those watching from home, Milano Cortina 2026 is delivering a first-of-its-kind immersive experience.

AI-Enhanced Storytelling: Artificial intelligence is being used to provide real-time 360-degree replays and data overlays that translate complex athletic movements into understandable graphics.

Universal Audio Description: Fans can use the "Audiodescrizione26" app to listen to live descriptions in multiple languages, ensuring that blind and visually impaired spectators never miss a heartbeat of the action.

Sensory Support: At the venues, organizers have provided quiet rooms and noise-cancelling headphones to alleviate overstimulation, alongside Hidden Disabilities Sunflower lanyards to help staff identify and support fans with non-visible needs.

A lasting legacy

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) hopes these advancements will spark a permanent shift in how the world views disability. "Designing for accessibility from the ground up creates better hospitality for everyone,"

noted a spokesperson for the Games.

As the world's best para-athletes compete for gold through March 15, the real victory may already be won: a host region that is now more inclusive, accessible, and welcoming than ever before. □



This handout photo taken and received from the OIS/IOC on March 3, 2022 shows Valeriy Sushkevych (L), president of the Ukrainian Paralympic Committee, speaking with IPC president Andrew Parsons (R) following a press conference ahead of the Beijing 2022 Winter Paralympic Games in Beijing.

Namibia dives into salmon farming with Norwegian know-how

Windhoek, Namibia

A Norwegian-led group is setting up salmon farming operations off the coast of Namibia, which is aiming to become Africa's first commercial sea-based producer of the increasingly popular food source.

The cold Atlantic waters off Namibia and South Africa are considered ideal for salmon farming but previous attempts at large-scale production have failed.

With about one million dollars in investment, the African Aquaculture Company (AAC) is setting itself up for a first harvest in about two years, a company representatives told AFP.

A second licenced group, Benguela Blue Aqua Farming, is raising funds to begin its own operations.

"Namibia is poised to become the first African country to introduce industrial-scale Atlantic salmon farming," senior government official Kaire Mbuen-de said at a recent industry seminar.

It was a "bold and forward-looking step" that would create jobs and bolster the government's diversification drive at a time when the fishing industry -- Namibia's second-biggest



This Aerial view shows a salmon farm in Trondheimsfjord on June 19, 2025 in Trondheim, Norway.

exporter after minerals was facing from declining stocks, he said.

AAC, a Norwegian-Namibian tie-up, has already brought over a first batch of ova from Europe for "trial acclimatisation" at a freshwater hatchery in South Africa, it said.

If all goes well, the facility is expected to receive 50,000

eggs by the third quarter of this year.

More would follow, up to a maximum of 350,000, country director Clement Kaukuetu told AFP.

In the meantime, work will begin to build floating cages off Namibia's southern town of Luderitz.

After several months, the eggs will be transported from the Western Cape

hatchery by truck to Luderitz, a journey of around 1,200 kilometres (745 miles) and released into the Atlantic waters.

- Norwegian expansion -

"The projected harvest of salmon for export or consumption will be at the last quarter of 2027 or early 2028," Kaukuetu said.

"We first aim to satisfy the

local/regional market," he said.

"We are however in negotiations with possible off-takers in the Middle East and Asia."

AAC aims to produce 1,000 tonnes of Atlantic salmon annually in the pilot phase, reaching 51,000 tonnes at full capacity.

This is modest compared to Norway's own production of around 1.5 million tonnes a year, according to industry figures.

Chile produces around 700,000 tonnes, followed by Scotland with nearly 200,000 tonnes.

Promoted as a nutrient-dense, high-protein superfood, salmon is gaining popularity in emerging markets such as China and Brazil, with the United States and Europe by far the largest consumers, according to industry heavyweight, Mowi ASA.

Demand is growing at about seven percent a year, more than double the three-percent growth in supply, it said in its 2025 Salmon Industry Handbook. Branching out to Namibia, a largely desert nation of around three million people, offers room for Norway's crowded industry. □

Ghana's Highlife finds its rhythm on UNESCO world stage

Accra, Ghana

On a humid Tuesday night in Accra, Zen Garden is alive with sound, movement and memory as Highlife melodies spill into the open air, drawing families, friends and office workers who sway long past midnight as if the weekend has come early. Under soft lights, the four young men of the Kwan Pa band strike layered guitar lines and lilting rhythms, their live performance pulling cheers and applause from a crowd visibly elated, white handkerchiefs twirling above heads as revellers dance, sing along and clink glasses between bites of food.

"It's like therapy," one patron said, laughing as couples glide across the floor and strangers dance together, united by a sound

that has shaped Ghanaian life for generations.

That charged ambience has taken on new meaning after Ghana's famed Highlife music was inscribed recently on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list, a major international recognition of one of west

Africa's most influential musical traditions.

UNESCO announced the decision on December 10, describing Highlife as a "monumental expression of Ghana's musical genius, culture, and global influence", honouring generations who have preserved and adapted the genre

since the early 20th century.

For Asah Nkansah, leader of the Kwan Pa band whose name means "the right path" the timing is symbolic.

"This news is just great," Nkansah told AFP. "If you trace the origin of Highlife music, we can trace it to September 1925. And so, this year, 2025, we are celebrating 100 years of Ghanaian Highlife music."

At Zen Garden, that century-old tradition feels anything but distant. The band's palm-wine-infused Highlife sets prompt spontaneous dancing, with patrons singing lyrics from memory and cheering solos deep into the night.

"Highlife talks about almost everything, passion, love, social and everything," Nkansah said.

"Highlife Music naturally has what we call content... it is not music for music's sake."

- Highlife influenced Afro-beats, hiplife -

UNESCO's listing places Highlife among the world's protected cultural treasures, a move expected to boost Ghana's cultural standing and encourage investment in music preservation, tourism and the creative arts.

Highlife's layered guitars, horn sections and storytelling have shaped national identity for more than a century, popularised by legends such as E.T. Mensah, Nana Ampadu, Paapa Yankson, A.B. Crentsil, Osibisa, Amakye Dede and Kojo Antwi, and influencing later movements including hiplife and Afrobeats. □



Revellers dance to Highlife Music at the Zen Gardens in Accra, Ghana, on December 16, 2025.

National Park Arikok: Aruba's biggest nature conservation

The National Park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are numerous animals to discover, for example the bright blue Cododo or mighty Warawara.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: A majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heading back to the ocean after laying her eggs during breeding season. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Nature Conservation

The protected area of National Park Arikok was officially established in 2000. Arikok National Park is a 34 square kilometers (7907 acres) of natural area, located at the north-eastern part of Aruba which contains examples of most of the island's flora and fauna against a backdrop of great geological complexity. We are proud to state that approximately 18% of the total land area of Aruba is assigned as a National Park, to protect and preserve the flora, fauna, geology and historical remains present within Arikok National Park.

The Landscape

There is a great geological variety



within the park. The main aspects are the rough hills of the volcanic Aruba lava formation, the mysterious rocks of the batholithic quartz-diorite/tonalite, and the limestone rocks from fossilized coral. The two tallest hills on the island are situated within the park. Jamanota hill 188 meters (617 ft) and Arikok hill 176 meters (577 ft), from which the name of the park is derived.

The line of the permanently wind-and-wave beaten North Coast is broken by several bays (boca's). Most of them are small yet impressive inlets at the mouth of dry riverbeds. Some of these bays (boca's) are spectacular sights, adorned with white, sandy beaches and sand dunes, as is the case at Boca Prins and Dos Playa.

Arikok is also home to Conchi, Aruba's most important natural attraction; also known as The Natural Pool. The journey to the Pool is an adventure by itself and only possible by foot, horse, or 4x4 vehicle. As of 2020, ATVs and UTVs are not allowed in the park due to its significant impact on nature.

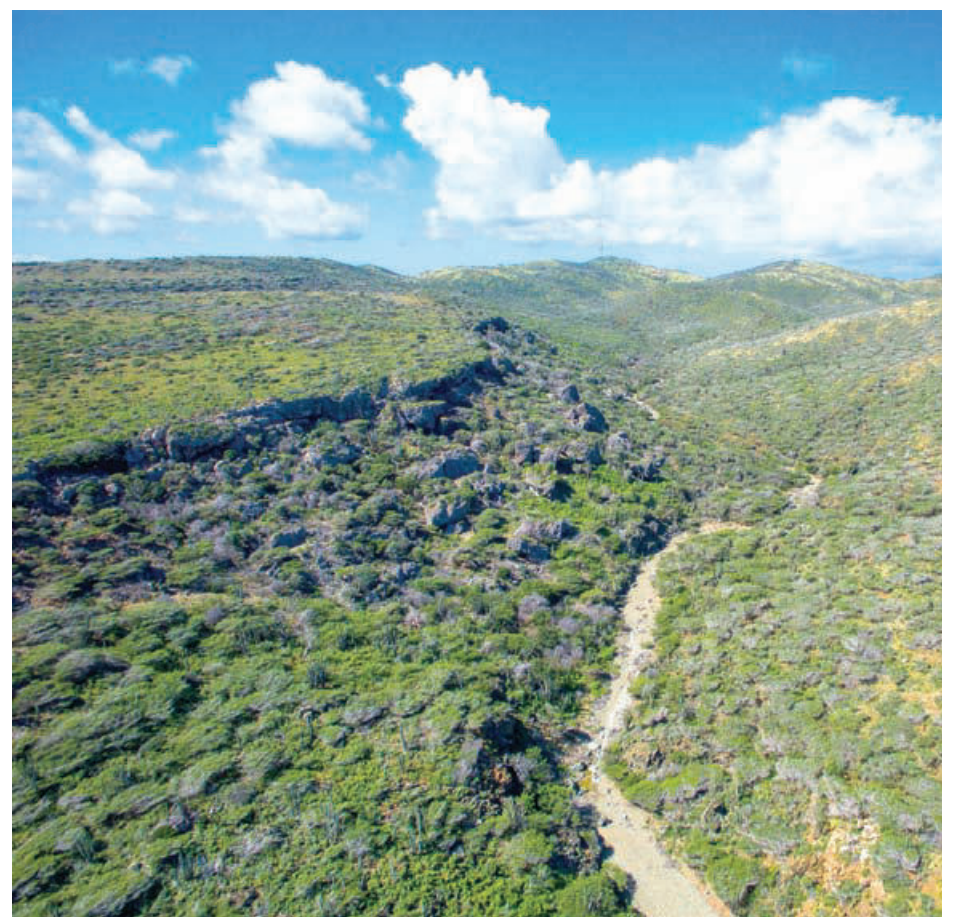
Cultural and Historical components

There are a number of sites within

the park that attest to the history of Aruba. The Caquetío Indians left rock paintings in Cunucu Arikok and Fontein Cave.

Old plantation (Cunucus) sites tell the story of an active yet challenging agricultural past.

These Cunucus were also residential areas for the few families that worked the land. These families found ways to survive in the difficult conditions, and were able to erect their homes with materials found in the area. Two of these adobe houses have been restored. Park rangers are learning many of the old building techniques in order to preserve this unique Aruban mud-house. At Cunucu Arikok and near Plantation Prins you can find these adobe houses.



Park Management

The Aruba Conservation Foundation (ACF), formerly known as Aruba National Park Foundation, manages the national park. This foundation was established in July 2003. In February 2017, mangrove and wetland RAMSAR site #198 Spanish Lagoon was annexed to Arikok National Park due to its importance as a feeding and breeding area for water birds and as a nursery area for a variety of marine organisms. With this addition, the areas under management increased by 70 hectares while the amount of species of flora and fauna to be conserved to over 250. On December 21st, 2018 (AB 2018 no. 77) Parke Marino Aruba – currently consisting of four marine protected areas (MPAs) – was officially established and subsequently brought under management of ACF. In 2019, preliminary management plan for marine were introduced for Parke Marino to conserve reefs, seagrass beds, and mangrove forests and in 2020 ACF was given additional management areas such as the Saliñas (Druif, Malmok, Cerca, Palm Beach, Bubali etc.) and also additional areas such as Rooi Manonchi, Ser'I Teishi etc. Managed areas can be seen here: <https://acf.aw/>.

Visit the National Park Arikok to see the wonder of Aruba's nature. The visitor center in San Fuego and entrance in Vader Piet (San Nicolas) is open daily from 8:00 AM to 16:00 PM. Contact the ACF via e-mail, info@acf.aw or call +297 585 1234 for more information. □



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Po-Ké Ono Brings Bold Asian Fusion to Aruba's Dining Scene

Innovative eatery blends island culture with modern Asian cuisine



In a culinary landscape known for its diversity and creativity, Po-Ké Ono stands out as a vibrant and contemporary addition to Aruba's restaurant scene. With locations at Azure in Palm Beach and the Renaissance Marketplace in Oranjestad, the concept introduces a refreshing take on Asian fusion dining—casual in style, yet refined in execution.

Established in 2020, Po-Ké Ono was envisioned as a space where flavor, culture, and creativity intersect. The menu features an array of signature dishes including poke bowls, steamed bao, and sushi, crafted with precision and a focus on freshness. Drawing on Asian influences, the restaurant delivers bold flavors in an approachable format, appealing to a broad audience of locals and visitors alike.

The ambiance is designed to be welcoming and relaxed, with a philosophy centered

around accessibility and enjoyment. Whether dining indoors or grabbing a quick bowl on the go, guests can expect a consistently high standard in both service and cuisine. With extensive menu options, including selections for vegan diners, Po-Ké Ono caters to a wide range of tastes and dietary preferences.

While the concept leans into fast-casual dining, the quality of ingredients and thoughtful



preparation reflect fine-dining roots. Many of the restaurant's core ingredients are sourced locally, emphasizing sustainability and support for Aruba's agricultural community. The result is a dining experience that honors both the island's spirit and the culinary traditions it draws inspiration from.

Open daily from 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM, Po-Ké Ono continues to gain recognition as one of the island's premier destinations for sushi, poke, and

bao. Its growing popularity is a testament to Aruba's evolving food culture—one that embraces global influence while staying rooted in community and craft.

For those seeking a modern taste of Asia in the heart of the Caribbean, Po-Ké Ono offers a flavorful and memorable experience worth exploring. □



Share your Aruba memories with us!



(Oranjestad)—We at Aruba Today love to hear from our readers. This is why we love our segment “Aruba to me”, where we ask our readers to send in their message and pictures sharing what Aruba means to them.

What we also love is creating and sharing memories. This is why we would like to invite you, our lovely reader, to share your fond memories on the island with us. It could be a photo from the first time you visited island to the pictures you took at that Carnival Parade you attended last week. All is welcome!

Tell us your stories and let us give you a shout-out in our next issue! □

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Discover the Best of Paseo Herencia



Shopping

Paseo Herencia invites you to shop at an easy island pace in a charming open air setting, where international style meets local creativity. Browse fashion, fragrances, footwear, jewelry, skincare, and souvenirs all in one relaxed stroll.

Find well-known brands such as Tommy Hilfiger, Calvin Klein, Aldo, Carmen Steffens, and Psycho Bunny, then stop by Pandora to turn Aruba themed charms into keepsakes you can take home. For something truly one of a kind, explore locally handmade gifts and artwork at The Artist Co-op and Olla Gallery, where island inspired pieces and personalized options add a meaningful touch. Lumiere Candles adds to the local charm with Aruba inspired candles, perfect for bringing a little island warmth back home.

For a special accessory, discover permanent jewelry at Gloria Feliciano, crafted locally for everyday wear. For island wellness, Aruba Aloe offers locally made skincare and gifts created with aloe grown right here on the

island. Beauty lovers can visit Maggy's for favorite beauty essentials and services for hair, nails, and makeup, perfect for a quick refresh before dinner or a night out.

A World of Flavors

Dining at Paseo Herencia fits every moment of the day, from breakfast to late night bites. Start at Che Bar, serving breakfast from 7:30 AM and continuing throughout the day with comforting favorites, including classic Neapolitan style pizza.

For bold traditional flavors, Xixon Spanish Restaurant is a go to for signature dishes such as paella paired with a wide wine selection. If you are craving something modern, Fusion Cuisine brings a creative twist with its original take on sushi. The Lazy Turtle offers comforting classics and craveable appetizers, while Sexy Shrimp adds a sports bar atmosphere to the mix, pairing standout drinks with a diverse menu that is perfect for gathering with friends and watching any game.

As the evening continues, follow your cravings. Enjoy Mexican favorites at Iguana Can-



tina, share Dutch specialties at Pomm's Frites, and finish with something sweet at Mythos or Mimo's roll up ice cream. Starbucks is always nearby for a familiar coffee or an easy refresh between stops.

VIP Cinema

Caribbean Cinemas VIP delivers a premium movie experience on the second floor, easily accessible by escalator. Settle into plush reclining seats and enjoy high quality screens, state of the art projection, and immersive sound. A well stocked concessions counter offers classic popcorn, snacks, and drinks including wine, making it ideal for a laid back movie night or a special outing.

Location and Hours

Paseo Herencia is located in Aruba's high rise area, directly across from Holiday Inn. The mall is open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM, and on Sundays from 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM. For the latest updates and upcoming events, follow our social media pages and visit our website at www.paseoherencia.com.

Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals

(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face a fine that you have to pay before leaving. This would surely not be a pleasant experience. Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours! □



The stories of “Compa Nanzi”

(Oranjestad)—The most popular character you may hear about in the Caribbean is Anansi, known locally on Aruba as “Compa Nanzi”. Local children grew up hearing the tales of the conniving spider, and his legacy forms part of the oral narrative tradition that is common in Aruba.

Although the stories are most popular in the Caribbean, “Compa Nanzi” is not entirely unknown globally, especially not in the West African region. Brought to the “new world” by enslaved Africans from Ghana, the historical thread of how Nanzi was introduced on Aruba follows the enslaved Africans in Curacao during the colonial era, which saw the biggest population of enslaved Africans in the Dutch Caribbean.

The stories of Compa Nanzi were a sign of hope for freedom among the slaves, who passed around different stories involving the famous spider through word of mouth, due to not being able to express their native culture in the new world. These stories were a way to not only preserve their culture, but it acted as a medium for relief during the harsh treatment to which they were subjected to.

It wasn't until the end of the nineteenth century that the stories of Nanzi were written down in different languages. However, not all stories are completely alike in every country, as is the risk of oral story telling. However, one thing will always be dominant in Compa Nanzi's stories: his sneaky ways to

get what he wants!

How Nanzi fooled the king
One day Nanzi was taking a stroll near the castle of Shon Arei, the king. He had this sudden urge to walk in. He didn't think too much about it and committed to what he had in mind. It was a warm afternoon, and the castle personnel were taking their afternoon nap. Even the soldier guarding the castle door was fast asleep, snoring so loud that his beard bounced up and down on his chin. Nanzi just slipped past him, looked back for a moment then walk right on in.

Nanzi stumbled upon the king's quarters. With all his excitement he sat in the king's throne, and put on his crown that was hanging on the side of the throne. It was very hot that day, and it wasn't long until Nanzi too fell asleep, right there on the king's throne. He was so deep in sleep and snoring so loud, that even when the king found him in his seat, Nanzi did not even notice.

Shon Arei was flabbergasted by the sight of Nanzi on his throne, wearing his crown. How disrespectful! “Soldiers, get him!” he commanded. Nanzi was sound asleep, but when the soldiers picked him up, he jumped from fright. By then though, the soldier already had him in their hold.

“Put him in a sack, stitch it up and throw him in the ocean!” the king said furiously. Two soldiers immediately entered the chamber, took the crown off Nanzi's head and



pushed him in a sack.

Nanzi was terrified; it looks like this time he won't get away with his schemes. To get to the ocean, the soldier walked a long distance, and where beginning to feel very thirsty. Luckily they passed by a pub, and decided to have a nice cold beer. They set the sack with Nanzi in it outside and went to enjoy the refreshments. Nanzi was still trembling with fear in the sack.

What is that he hears? A herd of sheep walking by?

“Compadre, listen here!” Nanzi screamed as loud as he could. The sheep herder got close to the sack. “What is this?”

“Man, there is something very beautiful in here that you can see. It's very rare and strange, but indeed, there is something so beautiful in here that you've never seen or will ever see,” Nanzi told the herder.

The herder, very dumb, believed Nanzi's word. “Let me see!” he said.

“Well if you must insist,” Nanzi said, “I'll let you take a look, but only for a quick second.” The herder opened the sack, and Nanzi immediately jumped out. Before the herder could even take a look into the sack, Nanzi pushed him in it, and the herder fell head first in.

Nanzi didn't waste any time, and closed off the sack real tight. He then picked up the herder's hat and starting walking behind the traveling sheep as if nothing happened. After a little while, the soldiers headed back outside to con-

tinue their journey. As they picked up the sack, the poor herder started screaming to let him out, but the soldiers ignored him, thinking it was Nanzi.

Shon Arei went strolling a while later. He thought to himself: “This time Nanzi could not get away with his foolishness. He probably drowned in that sack ages ago.” That is why, when he saw Nanzi walk behind the herd of sheep on the street, he was flabbergasted again. “Nanzi! Aren't you suppose to be at the bottom of the ocean floor?”

“I was, Your Majesty,” Nanzi replied. But you know what; there are so many things to see down there in the sack! Like this herd of sheep. Seeing that they had no herder, I started walking behind them and gained their trust pretty quickly. At the bottom of the ocean there are so many wonderful things, like diamonds, and bags of gold. Chests of silver and other precious stones,” Nanzi told the king.

“What is that you say?” the king was intrigued. “I want to see it too!” The king immediately demanded to his soldiers to be put in a sack and be placed in the ocean. Naturally, Shon Arei died because of this. He was never found again. Nanzi followed the soldier back to the castle, where sat once again on the late king's throne and put his crown on. He took possession of all of Shon Arei's belongings, and lived the rest of his life as king. □

Story and pictures are from “Kon Nanzi a Nek Shon Arei (i otro kuentanan antiano di e araña sabi)” by Nilda Pinto.



Aruba's neighborhoods; the meaning behind their names

Just like any other country, Aruba has unique and beautifully named neighborhoods that all form a part of its culture and development. Many of these names have a historical background and meaning that teaches us about the island and its rich culture every day.

With this series, we want to take you on a journey of discovery, where you'll learn not only the beautiful names but the history behind it that gives it life and meaning.

Anabui/Tierra Del Sol

This neighborhood can be seen on Van Raders map and Werbata as Anna Boei. Anna Boei is a name of which there isn't much information about its origin.

The best historians were able to deduce is that this name came to be because of a miscommunication between Van Spengler and the natives who were living on the island. In the Arawak/Taino language one can find the word Anaiboa, which consists of Ana meaning flower or the best and Iboa; the juice of

a cassava, which together would mean "the best juice of a cassava".

If one assumes that the actual word heard was Ana-boio instead, consisting of Ana meaning the best and Boio (bohio); house, the iteration of Anabui would mean "the best house." This is the origin that has been more or less speculated and assumed for the word Anabui and its meaning.

During the Second World War and later, this area was used as a terrain for training of shooting by militia and later on Korps Mariniers (the marines of Aruba). By the end of the previous century a large part of Anabui was developed to have luxurious villas and a golf course, which lead to it getting the name Tierra Del Sol, Spanish for Land of the Sun. The name is not an official name, but the name of the development project that took place. It is hoped that the original and 'old' name of Anabui is never lost and



now it will be remembered by both locals and tourists.

Angochi

This name can be seen on the Werbata map with little and cursive letters. It is the unofficial name for the area given by a tenant to the land that was rented to him.

The biggest probability that historians believe is that it comes from native descent, during the time in the 19th century where

Mestizos still lived on Aruba. The name can't really be explain and according to books on its history seems to be more of a sign of corruption.

However, it seems to come from combining A(n), which is a generalizing prefix and Goeiza, which means 'the spirit of a living man'. Angochi remains more of a guess.

This neighborhood's abbreviation is; An.□



Cas di Torto

Cas di torto (also called cas di lodo or cas di bara) is a traditional building technique from Aruba. It refers to a type of houses made of mud with rounded corners. These houses were usually found around the plantations. The few structures that still exist are the oldest structures that are left standing in the country.

The technique probably came over from the Venezuelan Paraguaná Peninsula in the 18th century. Existing houses date back 150 years. Until 1925 many houses on Aruba were built



using this technique, after-

wards it fell into disuse. In 2005 there were 62 cas di torto houses left, of which only four were in good condition.

The skeleton of the houses is made up of round wooden poles placed with distances of 1.5 feet between them. Branches are interwoven between them, completing the structural support. On this basis, loam is applied, mixed with sand,

water and paragrass. This is then coated with aloe vera juice, which gives the white color and helps to protect against the weather.

On top of the poles pieces of wood are fitted that serve as the base for the roof beams. Until 1815 the roofing usually consisted of corn (maize) stems, afterwards the nuclei of columnar cacti were used. The floor is made of loam,

mixed with cement or cow dung.

The houses were usually divided into a kitchen, a living room, a porch and a bedroom. In the kitchen would be a wooden or metal barrel for storing water that was collected in small rain ponds. Around this barrel a thick loam wall would be erected. Often large families would live in these houses; people would sleep on mats on the floor.

If you visit the Arikok National Park you will be able to see a very nice cas di torto. □



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1 Rocker mecca

David 38 Sacred

6 Location song

10 Chris 39 Bumbling

of "The 40 Stand

Avengers" 41 Corn units

11 Be 42 Accords

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12 Grazing

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13 City near

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14 Base

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15 "Wild,

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16 Maui

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17 Suffering

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26 2005 Gus

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Angeles

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34 Beginning

36 Poll

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SILAS ORDER

DOWN

1 Sake

2 Act the

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3 Balmy

4 Annual

race,

for short

5 Snaky

shape

6 Mix up

7 Some

shirts

8 Outdo

9 Irritable

11 Shrinks

15 Neighbor

of Ga.

17 Visionary

20 — Aviv

21 Down in

the dumps

24 Extremist

25 It may

start

with "E"

27 Junior,

to senior

28 Declares

29 Studio

work

30 Place for

a game

31 Bengal

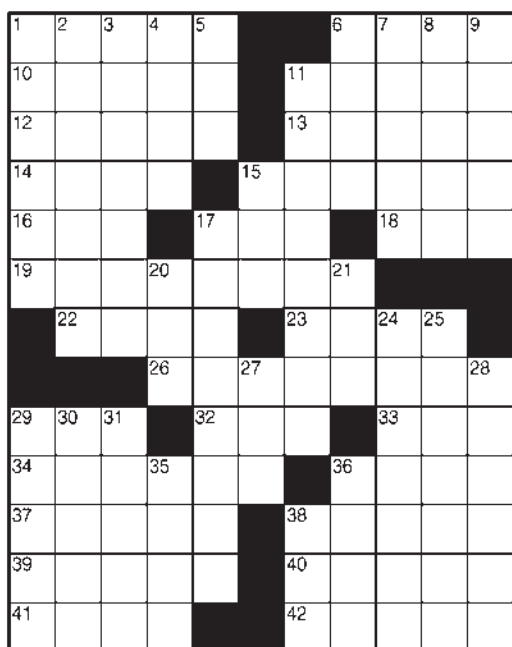
cat

35 Openings

36 TV

explorer

38 Atlas page



3-22

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-22

CRYPTOQUOTE

RGL XVTJ QSZDLIR H MVXN

EVJRGHVP EZXSR HQ FJQLTK,

EVC H CXV'R MVXN RGER

RXX ITLEBTJ. — NHTTHEF

QGERVLB

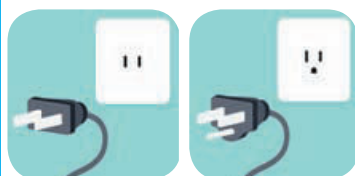
Cryptoquote: IF WE DON'T CHASE THINGS, SOMETIMES THE THINGS FOLLOWING US CAN CATCH UP. — L.M. MONTGOMERY

Cruise ship Schedule: March 09 - 15 2026

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
MON	09	BRITANNIA	07.00	18.00	B	1
		MARELLA DISCOVERY 2	08.00	20.00	C	1
		CARIBBEAN PRINCESS	08.00	22.00	I	1
TUE	10	SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	B	1
		NORWEGIAN SKY	13.30	22.30	C	1
		OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	I	1
WED	11	CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	07.00	17.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL MAGIC	09.00	22.00	C	1
THU	12	BRILLANCE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	B	1
		OCEANIA ALLURA	11.00	23.00	C	1
SUN	15	STAR PRIDE	06.00	18.00	C	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

8	5				9	4		3
			8	1	4		7	
9	4		3	6	5		1	
	9		4	3		7		
4	3				7			6
7	8			9	1	3		2
		8			3		2	
			2				3	7
	2	9		7				

Difficulty: ★★

3/10

Answer to previous puzzle

6	1	8	3	4	7	2	9	5
2	4	5	1	9	6	8	7	3
3	9	7	5	2	8	4	6	1
7	8	9	6	1	2	5	3	4
5	2	3	9	7	4	1	8	6
4	6	1	8	5	3	9	2	7
1	5	2	7	3	9	6	4	8
9	3	6	4	8	5	7	1	2
8	7	4	2	6	1	3	5	9

Difficulty: ★

3/9

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Fake AI satellite imagery spurs U.S.-Iran war disinformation

Washington, United States

The satellite image posted by an Iranian news outlet looked real: a devastated U.S. base in Qatar. But it was an AI-generated fake, underscoring the accelerating threat of tech-enabled disinformation during wartime.

The rise of generative AI has turbocharged the ability of state actors and propagandists to fabricate convincing satellite imagery during major conflicts, a trend that researchers warn carries real-world security implications.

As the US-Israeli war against Iran rages, Tehran Times, a state-aligned English daily, posted on X a "before vs. after" image it claimed showed "completely destroyed" US radar equipment at a base in Qatar. In fact it was an AI-manipulated version of a Google Earth image from last year of a U.S. base in Bahrain, researchers said.

The subtle visual giveaways included a row of cars parked in identical positions in both the authentic satellite photo and the manipulated image. Yet the manipulated photo garnered millions of views as it spread across social media in multiple languages, illustrating how users are increasingly failing to distinguish reality from fiction on platforms saturated with AI-generated visuals.

Brady Africk, an open-source intelligence researcher, noted an "increase in manipulated satellite imagery" appearing on social media in the wake of major events including the Middle East war.

"Many of these manipulated images have the hallmarks of imperfect AI-generation: odd angles, blurred details, and hallucinated features that don't align with reality," Africk told AFP.

"Others appear to be an image manipulated manually, often by superimposing indicators of damage or another change on a



The screen of a GPS attached to the dashboard of a vehicle as residents of Dubai face GPS disruptions on March 9, 2026, in Dubai.

satellite image that had no such details to begin with," he said.

- 'Fog of war' -

Information warfare analyst Tal Hagin flagged another AI-generated satellite image purporting to show that Israeli-US jets had targeted the painted silhouette of an aircraft on the ground in Iran, while Tehran seemingly moved real planes elsewhere. The telltale clues included gibberish coordinates embedded in the fake image, which spread across sites including Instagram, Threads and X.

AFP detected a SynthID, an invisible watermark meant to identify images created using Google AI. The fabricated satellite images follow the emergence of imposter OSINT or open-source intelligence accounts on social media that appear to undermine the work of credible digital investigators.

"Due to the fog of war, it can be very difficult to determine the success of an adversary's strikes. OSINT came as a solution, using public satellite imagery to circumvent the censorship" inside countries like Iran, Hagin said.

"But it's now being preyed

upon by disinformation agents," he added.

Reports of fake satellite imagery created or edited using AI also followed the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the four-day war between India and Pakistan last year.

- 'Critical awareness' -

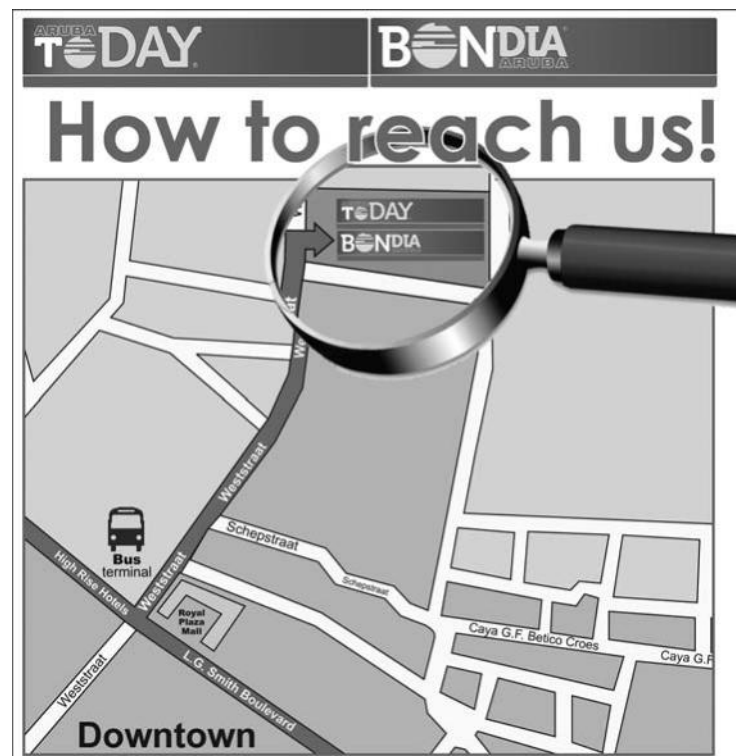
"Manipulated satellite imagery, like other forms of misinformation, can have real-world impacts when people act on the information they come across without verifying its authenticity," Africk said.

"This can have effects that range from influencing

public opinion on a major issue, like whether or not a country should engage in conflict, to impacting financial markets."

In the age of AI, authentic high-resolution satellite imagery collected in real time can give decision-makers vital clues to assess security threats and debunk falsehoods from unverified sources.

During a recent militant attack on Niamey airport in Niger, satellite intelligence company Vantor said it detected images circulating online purporting to show the main civilian terminal on fire. □



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San Nicolas

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PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Dakota: Tel.588 7364

San Nicolas:

Centro Medico:Tel.584 5794

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850

Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002

Urgent Care 586 0448

Walk-In Doctor's Clinic

+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank
Tel. 588 0002

FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia
Relacional Tel. 583 5400

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

The great return: How an "extinct" legend reclaimed the British canopy

KENT, England –

For over sixty years, the Large Tortoiseshell butterfly (*Nymphalis polychloros*) was a ghost of the British countryside, a name found only in yellowed Victorian field guides and "Presumed Extinct" conservation lists. But this March, in a development that has sent ripples of joy through the scientific community, the ghost has officially returned to life.

Following a surge of early spring sightings across southern England, Butterfly Conservation officially declared on March 9, 2026, that the

Large Tortoiseshell is no longer extinct. For the first time in the charity's 58-year history, a species once lost has been reclassified as a resident UK species.

A Mystery of Disappearance and Discovery

The Large Tortoiseshell was once a common sight in the woodlands of central and southern England. Its sudden "fading away" in



A small tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*) butterfly draws nectar from the flowers of a *Sorbaria sorbifolia* bush in a garden outside Moscow on June 27, 2021.

the 1950s and 60s remains one of the great ecological mysteries of the last century. Theories for its demise ranged from the ravages of Dutch Elm disease which decimated its primary larval food source to changes in woodland management and the rise of parasitic wasps.

By the 1980s, the species was gone. For decades, any stray sighting was dismissed as a rare migrant from continental Europe or an accidental release from a captive breeder. However, the narrative began to

shift around 2020.

In Dorset's Portland quarries, lepidopterists discovered the tell-tale silken webbing of caterpillars a definitive sign of local breeding. Since then, the momentum has been undeniable. This year, lucky observers in Kent, Sussex, Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight have reported a flurry of sightings, with Orlesstone Forest in Kent emerging as a premier "hot-spot" for the returning legend.

Nature's Resilience in a Warming World

The return of the Large Tortoiseshell is being hailed as a "living proof" that ecosystems can recover if given the chance. While the exact cause of its resurgence is still being studied, experts point to a combination of factors:

Climate Shifts: Warmer springs may be helping the species survive the UK's winter dormancy and disperse more effectively from the Netherlands and Belgium.

Rewilding Success: At the Knepp Estate in West Sus-

sex, rewilding efforts that favor "scrubland" the tangled mix of thorns and young trees have provided the perfect nursery for these arboreal insects.

The Return of Predators: Some naturalists suggest that the recovery of birds of prey, such as Sparrowhawks, has actually helped. By keeping small, caterpillar-eating birds away from the canopy tops, these raptors may have inadvertently protected the butterfly's eggs.

More Than Just a Winged Wonder

The Large Tortoiseshell is a charismatic giant of its kind. With a robust orange-and-black frame and striking blue wing-edges, it is significantly larger than its cousin, the Small Tortoiseshell. Unlike many butterflies that frequent garden flowers, the "Large Tort" is a forest dweller. It is often seen basking on sun-drenched tree trunks or feeding on the high blossoms of willow.

"This is not just a win for butterfly lovers; it's a vital indicator of forest health," says Dr. Richard Fox, Head of Science at Butterfly Conservation. "If a species as sensitive as the Large Tortoiseshell can find a foothold again, it gives us immense hope for other threatened insects." □



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Antarctic sea ice improves after four years of extreme lows: U.S. scientists

Paris, France

Antarctic sea ice coverage has likely rebounded this year, coming closer to

its annual summer average after four years of extreme lows, U.S. scientists said Monday.



A screengrab made on July 14, 2017 from a video released by the British Antarctic Survey shows the rift in the Larsen C Ice Shelf, on the Antarctic Peninsula, in February 2017.

The area covered by Antarctic sea ice likely reached its annual minimum level at 2.58 million square kilometres (996,000 square miles) on February 26, according to scientists at the National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC) at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Every year Antarctic sea ice reaches a minimum level during the southern hemisphere's summer, so this is the point that scientists measure it for annual readings. This year's level ranks as the 16th smallest since satellite

measurements began in 1979.

The 2026 minimum sea ice extent is closer to average than in the past four years, and 730,000 square kilometres above the record low set in February 2023, the scientists said.

But it was still 260,000 square kilometres below the 1981-2010 average.

"Through most of the year, Antarctic sea ice was well below the daily average," said Ted Scambos, senior research scientist at the Cooperative Institute for Research in the Environmental Sciences (CIRES). □



Jannik Sinner of Italy plays a forehand against Denis Shapovalov of Canada in their third round match of the BNP Paribas Open at Indian Wells Tennis Garden on March 08, 2026 in Indian Wells, California.

Sinner sets up Fonseca clash, Zverev advances at Indian Wells

Indian Wells, United States

World number two Jannik Sinner took another step toward a first Indian Wells Masters title on Sunday, easing past Denis Shapovalov 6-3, 6-2 to reach the fourth round and a clash with exciting Brazilian teenager Joao Fonseca. After dropping just two games in his second-round opener against Czech qualifier Dalibor Svrčina, Sinner was caught napping to drop his serve in the opening game. He responded with confidence against a potentially tricky opponent known for producing winners.

Sinner quickly recouped the break and grabbed another in the eighth game. "It's a very tough second match for me," the Italian said. "He's a very high-quality player... he had great wins in the past so I'm very happy about today's performance."

With one set in his pocket Sinner was in full control in the second, opening with a break on the way to a 5-2 lead and closing it out with a love game.

"I tried to stay solid on the baseline but also a bit more aggressive in the second set," Sinner said. "It was a tough start for me with a break down but I'm happy how I reacted."

Sinner faces the 19-year-old Fonseca for a place in

the quarter-finals.

Fonseca, who saved two match points in his second-round victory over Karen Khachanov, beat another seeded player, American Tommy Paul, 6-2, 6-3.

Fonseca brought the heat, displaying thunderous groundstrokes as he reached the fourth round of a Masters 1000 for the first time.

He said he was eager for the chance to test himself against four-time major winner Sinner.

"We tennis players, we look to playing against top players so it's going to be a pleasure and hopefully I can get the win," he said. Fourth-seeded German Alexander Zverev held off a determined Brandon Nakashima 7-6 (7/2), 5-7, 6-4. Zverev didn't have a break point against the 30th-ranked American until the third set. He missed his first two opportunities before finally making one count, breaking Nakashima in the final game to seal the victory.

"He played a fantastic match today," Zverev said of Nakashima, who had 17 aces to Zverev's 15.

"He served like I have never seen before. He was hitting his spots well. Every ace was more or less on the line for him, so I've got to give credit to him. He played a

great match."

Zverev gained the upper hand in a close-run contest with a dominant first-set tiebreaker, but the American converted his fifth break chance for a 6-5 lead in the second and leveled the match with a love game. "Definitely happy to get the win because that was a difficult match," said Zverev, who next plays American Frances Tiafoe.

- Tien tops Shelton -

Frances Tiafoe beat Flavio Cobolli 6-1, 6-2 in a rematch of last week's final in Acapulco won by the Italian. Rising U.S. talent Learner Tien knocked off eighth-seeded compatriot Ben Shelton 7-6 (7/3), 4-6, 6-3. Tien peppered big-serving Shelton with 15 aces while Shelton, apparently still feeling the effects of the illness that slowed him in a second-round win over Reilly Opelka, produced just eight.

"It's great," Tien said of lining up a last-16 shot at 18th-seeded Spaniard Alejandro Davidovich Fokina a 6-2, 4-6, 6-2 winner over 12th seed Jakub Mensik. But he knew Shelton wasn't at his best.

"I don't think he's been feeling great all week, but he's an amazing competitor and he came out and gave it his all," Tien said. "So I just want to say, huge props to him." □

South Korea squeeze into World Baseball Classic quarter-finals

Tokyo, Japan

South Korea squeezed into the World Baseball Classic quarter-finals by the finest of margins after a nerve-jangling 7-2 win over Australia on Monday to finish as Pool C runners-up.

The South Koreans needed to win by five clear runs at the Tokyo Dome to advance ahead of Australia and Taiwan and they were staring elimination in the face until they scored the crucial run in the ninth inning.

The final out sparked wild celebrations among their players and fans as they advanced past the pool stage for the first time since 2009.

"We gave up a run in the eighth inning and we only had one inning left to score," said South Korean manager Ryu Ji-hyun.

"But every player left all their tension out on the field, everything from our history."

The result ended Australia's hopes of reaching the quarter-finals for the second successive tournament, having sensationally eliminated South Korea in 2023.

Manager Dave Nilsson said Australia had "failed but at the same time we did a lot of good things".

"I think it just showed we can play on this stage but we've got more work to do," he said.

"We've got some more improvements to make in the big moments."

South Korea qualified for the knock-out round in the United States along with Japan, who clinched top spot in Pool C the previous day with their third win of the tournament.

The South Koreans finished with the same win-loss record as Australia and Taiwan but went through with a better tiebreak record.

South Korea's Moon Hyun-bin said the players "felt the pressure" throughout the game.

"This is the World Baseball Classic, the highest level," he said.

"We have great hitters and pitchers but we had to score a lot of runs."

South Korea quickly built up a five-run lead but Travis Bazza put Australia in the driving seat when he drove in a run in the eighth inning.

The South Koreans had to come up with an immediate reply and they did when Australia's Jarryd Dale made a throwing error that allowed Park Hae-min to reach third base.

"Disappointed to see him make an error," Nilsson said of Dale's play. □



South Korea's players pose after team's victory at the end of the World Baseball Classic (WBC) Pool C game between Australia and South Korea at the Tokyo Dome in Tokyo on March 9, 2026

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Wemby shines as Spurs thrash Rockets, Lakers down Knicks

Los Angeles, United States

Victor Wembanyama scored 29 points as the San Antonio Spurs laid down a playoff marker with a dazzling 145-120 thrashing of the Houston Rockets on Sunday.

French superstar Wembanyama was one of six Spurs players to reach double figures as San Antonio bombarded Western Conference rivals Houston with a stream of 21 three-pointers.

Wemby dominated at both ends of the court, fleshing out his stat line with four blocks and two steals in addition to eight rebounds.

The towering Frenchman was backed with 23 points from Stephon Castle and 20 points apiece from De'Aaron Fox and Keldon Johnson.



Victor Wembanyama #1 of the San Antonio Spurs dunks against the Houston Rockets in the first half at Frost Bank Center on March 8, 2026 in San Antonio, Texas.

"It was fun teams have a hard time figuring us out," Wembanyama told NBC Peacock after the rout. "Everybody can make shots from everywhere on the court, so we have answers for anybody. "It's all momentum. We've got guys playing with confidence. It's just beautiful to see."

The win cemented San Antonio's status as the form team of the NBA heading into the final weeks of the regular season.

The Spurs are now second in the Western Conference with a 47-17 record and have won 15 of their last 16 games.

In other games on Sun-

day, Luka Doncic scored 35 points as the Los Angeles Lakers shrugged off the injury absence of LeBron James to score a convincing 110-97 defeat of the in-form New York Knicks. Slovenian star Doncic rattled in five three-pointers and shot 11-of-25 from the field to help the Lakers complete a wire-to-wire victory in Los Angeles.

The Lakers went into the game short-handed with James ruled out with a left elbow contusion following a heavy fall in Thursday's defeat to Denver.

But Doncic and Austin Reaves picked up the offensive slack, combining

for 60 points against a potent Knicks team who have averaged 117 points per game this season.

- Celtics roll, Pistons slump - Lakers coach JJ Redick said his team's all-round effort in stifling the Knicks' offense had created the platform for victory.

"We always have three keys defensively, and three keys offensively," Redick said. "Tonight there was one key and that was multiple efforts. We did that throughout the game, not just in spurts.

"This was going to be a gritty, tough game that we had to win with effort - and

we did that."

Karl-Anthony Towns led the Knicks scoring with 25 points, while Jalen Brunson added 24.

The Lakers improved to 39-25 with the victory and are fifth in the Western Conference, 10 and a half games behind leaders Oklahoma City (50-15).

Elsewhere, Jayson Tatum continued his successful return to action following a 10-month injury layoff with 20 points in the Boston Celtics' 109-98 road win over the Cleveland Cavaliers.

Jaylen Brown led Boston's scorers with 23 points with

five Celtics players finishing in double figures as they improved to 43-21 to remain hard on the heels of the Eastern Conference-leading Detroit Pistons.

"I think we did a good job," said Tatum, who returned to the Celtics lineup on Friday after nearly 300 days on the sidelines rehabbing a ruptured right Achilles tendon.

"I can't stress enough how happy I am to be out here playing, with the team, with the guys, competing, making plays, making mistakes," Tatum added. "Just happy to be out there."

While Boston can now look ahead to what promises to be a blockbuster showdown with San Antonio on Tuesday, Eastern Conference leaders Detroit were left with further concerns on Sunday after falling to their fourth straight loss in a 121-110 reverse against the Miami Heat.

Detroit head coach JB Bickerstaff is confident though that the Pistons will emerge from their slump.

"This is the first time really this year that we've hit somewhat of a bump in the road, and it's good for us," Bickerstaff said after the defeat.

"The adversity is good for us. It's only going to bring us tighter together.

This group has proven that. So, there's just opportunity for growth, opportunities for lessons. We'll be just fine." □